

Medicare Newsletter Article for Consumers

Story in Three Parts

July 20, 2005

STORY THREE

What You Need to Know About Medicare and Diabetes An Update from the National Diabetes Education Program and The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

There is good news from Medicare for people with diabetes--and those at risk for the disease. Over the past few years, Medicare has made several changes in its benefits related to preventive care and diabetes. Here is an update about Medicare and diabetes to help you get the most out of your health care insurance. This is the third of three columns.

New Medicare Prescription Drug Plans Begin January 2006

January 1, 2006 marks the beginning of Medicare prescription drug plans for people who choose to enroll in them. This is the new "Part D" plan of Medicare. These plans may provide coverage for certain diabetes medications.

Enrollment in the new drug plans begins November 15, 2005. **If you do not enroll within 6 months of the date you become eligible for Part D coverage, Medicare may charge you a higher premium for your drug coverage.** People who are currently on Medicare should enroll during the initial enrollment period (November 15, 2005 to May 15, 2006) to avoid a penalty. Until the new plans take effect, Medicare-approved drug discount cards are available now.

For More Information

There are many resources where you can find more information about Medicare and diabetes as well as helpful tips for controlling and preventing diabetes. The National Diabetes Education Program has pulled this information together to help you control your diabetes for life.

Medicare Information

1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) or 1-877-486-2048 for TTY users.

www.medicare.gov

Diabetes Information and Resources

National Diabetes Education Program

1-800-438-5383

www.ndep.nih.gov